# ABS visits remote communities for the Marriage Survey (Media Release)

**MEDIA RELEASE**

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**ABS plans 200 remote community visits to help Indigenous participation in Marriage Law Postal Survey**

Today the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) released details of upcoming visits to remote areas to help Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities participate in the Australian Marriage Law Postal Survey.

ABS officers plan to visit about 200 remote locations with less regular or accessible postal delivery to allow Indigenous and other people living in remote parts of Australia to collect, complete and drop-off survey forms.

ABS Deputy Australian Statistician and Taskforce Lead, Jonathan Palmer, said the ABS was committed to meeting the needs of communities in remote regions.

“We are overcoming challenges posed by distance to provide all Australians, no matter where they live, with every opportunity to participate in the survey,” he said.

Mr Palmer said the one to three day visits to remote Indigenous communities were being planned in consultation with local communities to ensure cultural sensitivities were observed.

“The remote community visits will be made by authorised ABS officers experienced in supporting the collection of information in remote communities,” he said.

“Our officers will assist people who have difficulty receiving or collecting mail, are travelling away from home, or require some help to participate in the survey.”

During the remote visits, the ABS will:

- Engage with local communities
- Issue paper survey forms
- Accept completed survey forms
- Provide information on how to complete the form
- Provide access to translated material.

Mr Palmer said people in remote communities could also submit a paperless survey response in locations with phone and internet connectivity, between 25 September and 20 October 2017.

“This allows people to provide anonymous survey responses securely online, via an automated telephone service or with the support of our ABS Customer Assistance Team using a Secure Access Code.

“People can request a code from the Information Line, the ABS website or from authorised ABS officers visiting communities,” he said.

A number of other measures will ensure people in regional locations can participate in the survey:

- People who don’t have a street address will have their mail held for collection at their local mail agent
- People who have not received a survey form by post can attend one of 28 regional pick-up locations across Australia to collect a survey form by presenting sufficient identification
- 600 DHS agents, access points and remote service centres will provide self-service computers or phones for people to access survey information, request a new survey form or secure access code, or to submit a phone or internet survey response
- Audio support materials have been translated into a number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages, and advertising has also been translated into language.

Mr Palmer said remote Indigenous communities would have access to information about the Australian Marriage Law Postal Survey through radio, newspapers, online and telephone services.

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